

Communicating with Employees, the Public and the Media About Y2K

External Communication – The Media

- **Coordinate all messages/activities through your public information officer or designated spokesperson.**
- **Honest and accurate information is critical. Develop “Core Message.”**
- **If detailed information is being requested that is not immediately available, ask the reporter for time to research the issue. Don’t fake it to make it!**
- **Be pro-active. You must convince the community that your team is working hard on the Y2K issue.**
- **Do not hide your work! Even if problems are a probability. Begin talking about the process now!**
- **Reinforce the idea of standard emergency preparedness, not overreaction – “Be prepared, not scared.”**
- **Newspapers -- meet with the editorial board and any reporter covering technology issues and/or local government.**
- **Radio stations - try to arrange interviews on radio talk shows, monitor call in programs, and meet with them regularly.**
- **Television stations - provoke interest, but make sure you have a visual example available to drive the message home (i.e., utility bills, 911 communication centers, etc.)**
- **Arrange a bi-monthly Year 2000 Progress Report for public consumption. During final two months produce bi-weekly status.**
- **Offset any negative Y2K hysteria not based on fact. Discuss ways...**
- **Remember: The Media is a major ally in heightening awareness about Y2K.**

Community Outreach - Heighten Y2K Awareness

- **Define outreach universe or population (e.g., children, senior citizens, etc.). Scarce resources will not permit random or scattered approach.**

- Assess current or pending Y2K outreach efforts. For example, government, utility companies, non-profits, schools, etc.
- Inform local government officials and staff of Y2K issue.
- Promote any community involvement, such as Y2K Neighborhood Clubs, “speaking surrogates”, volunteerism, elementary school awareness programs, senior citizen awareness breakfasts, etc.
- Conduct community forums or informationals.
- Create consistent Y2K literature (brochures, handouts, promotional trinkets, etc.)
- Use any local public access/video/cable/radio outlets to reach the community.
- Post messages regarding Year 2000 on utility bills, quarterly newsletters, etc.
- Access newsletters of schools, government agencies, and organizations.

Internal Communication – Employees, Staff, and Managers

- Understand and be very sensitive to internal dynamics.
- Engage staff by informing, updating, and communicating Y2K issues.
- Identify key individuals that are important sources of information.
- Establish direct link with employees.
- Emphasize formal documentation process on Y2K related matters.
- Review internal Y2K customer related practices and enhance upon.
- Discuss seriousness of Y2K humor and/or jokes.
- Create internal newsletters and bi-weekly CIO message.
- Address important overtime issues. Notify in advance of any potential commitment.
- Sponsor Y2K employee events (brown bag lunch meetings, briefings, etc.).
- Boost moral and reinforce a team approach.